

Tapping (into the heart) by Delirious_Insanity

Series: [Tapping \(into the heart\) \[3\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Angst with a Happy Ending, Hurt No Comfort, Implied/Referenced Character Death, Implied/Referenced Child Abuse, Implied/Referenced Torture, M/M, Mild Hurt/Comfort, Season/Series 02 Spoilers

Language: English

Characters: Billy Hargrove, Dustin Henderson, Heather Holloway, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Tommy Hagan, Will Byers

Relationships: Billy Hargrove/Steve Harrington, Eleven | Jane Hopper/Mike Wheeler, Jonathan Byers/Nancy Wheeler, Joyce Byers/Jim "Chief" Hopper, Maxine "Max" Mayfield/Lucas Sinclair, Robin Buckley & Steve Harrington, Robin Buckley/Heather Holloway

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Tapping (into the heart)

Steve laid awake, staring at the whitewashed ceiling. His mind raced, memories, hopes and dreams flitting by in a second. There wasn't much left for him to do except wait out the inevitable.

Wait until the Upside Down comes back to finish what it had started.

Sighing, Steve turned to his side, glancing at the time. His bleary eyes could hardly make out the numbers displayed on the clock, so he promptly ignored them. Starting to doze, he dreamed. Dreamed of a life without the Upside Down, without living monsters attacking and killing everyone he cared about.

Sometimes, Steve felt like he was in a movie, a television show that would continue running its course without worry for his own psyche. He was tired and exhausted, living in constant stress and worry over stuff he has no control for.

Oh, he wishes he could change everything that has happened. He would change the past for all of them, making sure the kids were happy and accepted as they were. He would give Billy his mother back, and Hopper his daughter Sarah. He would make sure everyone was happy, even if it was at his own expense.

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The alarm blared at 5 in the morning, dragging Steve from the depths of his sleep. Forcing himself out of bed, he got ready, throwing on his police uniform and making a cup of scorching black coffee.

He huffed at the irony in it, that he now prefers black coffee simply because of when Billy apologized. For some reason, ever since that day, Steve has been unable to drink anything other than black coffee. Maybe it was because he enjoyed the flavor more, got more caffeine, or simply because it was how Billy drank his own coffee.

Yeah. Definitely *not* the last one.

Getting himself out of his head, Steve stepped outside the cabin,

closing and locking the door behind him. Walking to Hopper's cruiser, he unlocked it before jumping into the car. Turning on some country music, he drove away, heading to the police station to start his work. He ignored the pain that entered his heart everyday he left behind the cabin, always afraid he would leave and never see it again.

*As if it was just a mere fever dream.*

Relaxing into the seat, he drove carefully, watching both sides of the road and making sure nothing suspicious was going on. Ever since he got out of the academy, a little over five years ago, Steve made sure to stay vigilant.

He constantly checked on the vines and tunnels, checking and rechecking Hawkins Lab while keeping a close eye on all people that entered and left the area. Sure, people called him paranoid. Tommy made constant jests about it, sitting at the front desk of his own fathers company.

The comments never bothered Steve, as he had good reason to be cautious. Even though Nancy and Jonathan told him that it was over, that it had been five years, he ignored their input.

They were happy and safe in New York, where they moved together a little over a year ago. They didn't have to look at the same places where everything happened, they didn't still have their weapons from those times sitting out and in the open. They were safe, but that's all Steve wanted from them.

He didn't want any of the kids to be in trouble ever again, especially Max and Dustin. Those two were basically his siblings at this point, with how often they wrote and called each other. They were worried about him, but they were one of the only ones who understood where he was coming from. That Steve wasn't desperately hoping for Billy to come back, but that he was genuinely worried and concerned it would return.

Of course, they didn't believe that it would come back, but they still supported him. And that is all Steve can ask for at this point.

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Arriving at the station, he waved to the person at the front desk, never having caught her name. She tried to talk to him a couple of times, seemed interested in him, but he never really did pay attention, too caught up in his own past and experience.

While he was finishing up the paperwork from the other day, he reminisced on his days in training.

From his own horrors, he became the best “cadet” there, always awake and ready before they were supposed to be up. He showed a lot of education on firearms, much more than the other recruits did. Basically, his trauma helped him rise in the ranks, helping him in gaining a job at Hawkins as well. Granted, he wasn’t Chief yet, but he knew he truly could get there if he wanted. Right now, Phil Callahan had taken over as Chief, an officer that worked underneath Hopper.

Steve often wondered if Hopper would be proud of him, or if he would be disappointed, much like his own father. He remembered that talk as if it happened yesterday, the disgust and hatred flowing from John’s voice and eyes. The harshness of the hits that rained down upon him. That night was possibly the worst night for Steve, simply because he had to withstand the pain without grabbing his nail bat, without punching his father because he reminded him of the past.

In all of the five years, Steve never once took off the pendant, keeping it locked around his neck forever. Another fact that enraged John.

The ringing of his phone drew him out of his thoughts, himself running on automatic when he answered.

“This is Officer Harrington, how can I help you today?”

“Uh-”

The person sounded awfully familiar, but Steve couldn’t place his finger on why.

“Is there something I can help you with? Are you lost, perhaps?”

It was still fairly early in the morning, only 8 at most. Usually, they didn't start getting calls until it neared lunch time, and even then, they were more helpful rather than dangerous. For some reason, this call gave Steve the chills, and he wished he had his nail bat with him, if only to trace over said nails.

"Yeah, yeah, I'm a little lost and just stumbled across a body? I'm honestly not too sure. They are really pale and have a tattoo on the inner arm."

Steve sat up, his eyes quickly shooting to his notepad. Grabbing a pen, he wrote down what the caller just said, his eyes barely seeing what he was writing.

"Can you tell me where you started your trek? Possibly give me an idea of where you are?"

Steve listened intentionally as they spoke, jotting down their answer.

"Alright, we'll send someone your way right now. It might take a minute or two, but they will be heading in your direction."

Steve quickly transferred the call to his cell, rushing to grab everything before leaving to go to Hawkins Lab. Rushing out the door, he continued asking questions,

"What does the person look like? Can you identify their gender? What are they wearing? Are they hurt?"

Continuously writing it down while taking care to head to the right area. After he had enough information, he quickly reassured the caller and transferred them back to the front desk, already knowing that Phil was going to chew him out when he returned.

Turning down the final curve, Steve saw the car parked beside the electric fence, and the trail that the caller followed into the woods. Quickly grabbing his flashlight, Steve jumped out of the car, rushing to find the person.

He followed the curves of the trail, reaching a fork in the road. Inhaling deeply, Steve readied himself to yell.

"This is Officer Harrington! I need to know which direction you are

in, so please make some noise!” Pausing, Steve listened closely, hearing branches breaking to the right of him. Looking down that side of the fork, he could barely make out the shouting.

Now that he heard the direction, he raced down the trail, keeping his flashlight near his hand and silently wishing he had his bat. When he started getting winded, he saw a clearing, with a person standing in it.

“Oh thank goodness you're here.” The caller, now identified as a female, hung up her phone, racing to hug Steve. Steve just hugged her back, not quite sure what to do.

“I was just jogging and saw this poor fellow collapsed without any shoes on his feet! Can you believe that? Makes me think he was running from something awfully bad.”

Letting Steve go, the older lady turned and showed him the boy she was talking about. Before taking at the male, Steve realized why the caller sounded familiar. She was Winnie Kline, the wife to the old mayor Larry Kline. After it was fabricated that he was the one that set off the bombings at Starcourt, he was arrested and moved to a higher government facility to be under proper supervision. Winnie ended up staying in Hawkins, stating that she was simply too attached to the small town to move because of her husband's arrest.

Turning away from Winnie, Steve took a proper look at the male body lying on the ground. His hair was buzzcut, skin pale and body small. Actually, now that Steve thought about it, the body wasn't small, instead it looked malnourished. Under fed. His back was barely moving, making it hard for Steve to believe he was breathing. Other than his torn clothes, which were white, and no shoes, he didn't look out of the ordinary.

Turning him over, Steve's eyes fell to the tattoo on the inside of his left wrist. His eyes widened as he stared, fear coiling in his gut as he read the number tattooed there.

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